



**Master of Science in Strategic & Digital Communication  
A Handbook for Graduate Students**

**Welcome to Drexel  
2021-2022**





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## Department Offices and Key Contacts

The Department is located at 3201 Arch Street, Suite 100. The phone number is 215-895-2456. Once you become a graduate student, your student I.D. should gain you access to the building. Student IDs are available at the Dragon Card office in the Creese Student Center at 33<sup>rd</sup> and Chestnut Streets.

### MS SDC Program

Program Director	Dr. Julia May	Room 163	215- 895-5804	<a href="mailto:julia.may@drexel.edu">julia.may@drexel.edu</a>
Program Manager	Nicole Pearson	Room 151	215-895-2524	<a href="mailto:nmp39@drexel.edu">nmp39@drexel.edu</a>

### Department of Communication

Department Head	Dr. Hilde Van den Bulk	Room 152	215-895-0245	<a href="mailto:hdv26@drexel.edu">hdv26@drexel.edu</a>
Department Administrator	Sharon Wallace	Room 150	215-895-2456	<a href="mailto:skw@drexel.edu">skw@drexel.edu</a>
Program Assistant	Jesse Jacobs	Front Area	215-571-4130	<a href="mailto:ijn33@drexel.edu">ijn33@drexel.edu</a>

## Academics

### Course Requirements and Electives

The program in Strategic and Digital Communication (SDC) requires 45 credits. Twenty-one credits (7 classes) make up the core curriculum, students choose 12 credits (four courses) from among COM course offerings as program electives, and students choose an additional 12 credits (four courses) as graduate electives. These courses can be additional COM courses or classes in other approved subject areas, as long as they are graduate courses (with a course number 500-799) and are appropriate to the student's goals.

The Core Courses are:

- COM 500 Reading and Research in Communication
- COM 574 Organizational Communication in Project Management
- COM 610 Theories of Communication and Persuasion
- COM 613 Ethics for Professional Communication
- COM 615 Media Environments in a Digital World
- COM 651 Media and Communication Policy in a Digitized World
- COM 698 Managing Communication Professional Identities in a Digital Age

A full and up-to-date list of **requirements for the SDC program** can be found in the Drexel University Graduate Catalog, along with descriptions for all courses. General requirements for all graduate students are listed on the [Office of the Provost website](#) and the [Graduate College website](#).

### Plan of Study

[DegreeWorks](#) is an online tool that students use to track progress towards the completion of their degree program, including required courses, number of credits earned, credits still needed, and GPA status. While sample plans of study are available in the catalog, students are encouraged to consult with the program manager before registering for their first term to develop an individual plan of study within DegreeWorks. This will help inform each term's registration and ensure that all required courses are taken at the appropriate time. The plan can be updated as a student moves through the program.



## Grades Policy

For all Core Courses and Program Electives, a grade of “B” or better must be earned to count as a passing grade; grades of “B-” or lower are considered failing and the class must be repeated in order to count towards degree completion.

For all Elective Courses only a grade of “C” or better counts as a passing grade; grades of “C-” or lower are considered failing and the class must be repeated to count towards degree completion. Please note that the Graduate College’s academic standing policy allows no more than two Cs to count towards degree completion.

## Time to Completion and Leave of Absence

As per Drexel University Graduate Policy, all program requirements must be completed within five years of a student’s initial date of matriculation. Anyone who exceeds this time may be subject to academic dismissal and would need to apply for Readmission. A student may request up to one additional year, subject to program and Graduate College approval.

For students who need to take a break from their studies, Drexel allows a Leave of Absence of anywhere from one term to up to one year. Students who take the maximum leave time of four consecutive terms will need to apply for Readmission to the program to rejoin their studies.

## Transfer Credit

Transfer of graduate courses from elsewhere must be approved by the program director. At least 30 credits towards the degree must be taken at Drexel. A grade of “B” or better is required. Students must receive pre-approval of transfer credit before taking a course at another institution.

## Registration

Students register for classes online through the Drexel One Portal. Students can look up courses each term in the [Term Master Schedule](#) by clicking the desired quarter, college, and department.

Log on to the [Drexel One Portal](#) with your e-mail ID and password. (Visit [Drexel IT](#) to find out how to activate your e-mail account.)

1. Click on the “Academics” tab
2. In the Registration Box, Click “Register for Courses”
3. Select the term you are registering for
4. Enter the CRN\* number(s) of the course(s) you are trying to register for

\*A CRN is a course registration number. This number can be found in the Term Master Schedule by clicking “Review the Term Master Schedule” under the Academics tab in Drexel One.

On Drexel One, you can register for classes, check your grades, review financial aid information, etc. Incoming graduate students can register for classes this way before they arrive at Drexel for their first term. Drexel Central will assign you a registration time ticket each term. Go to the [Registration page](#) for more information on registration time tickets or contact the department office.

## Independent Study

An independent study is an agreement between a student and full-time faculty member to pursue a course of study. They are restricted to students who: 1) want to study a topic beyond an offered course, 2) want to take a course not offered but does fall within the area of expertise of a faculty member, or 3)



need a requirement that was not offered during the student's tenure. Students may not take an undergraduate course for independent study credit.

All students in the MS SDC program can propose a topic for an independent study at any time. A proposal is required and should be submitted for approval by the Friday of Exam Week **before** the start of the term in which the independent study is requested. Students may obtain a proposal form from the program manager or program director. There is a limit of 6 quarter hours of independent study credits acceptable for the degree requirements.

## **Internship**

All students in the MS SDC program are required to complete a 6-month, full-time internship or equivalent (for example, a student could do two three-month, full-time placements).

While the program will try to help with placement, students should expect to work on their own as well, to find suitable internships. Students can also make an appointment to meet with a representative at the [Steinbright Career Development Center](#) for help finding an internship. Drexel also offers [Handshake](#) – a job board with easy access to a large pool of employers and their job postings – to students and alumni. Please note, some internships (e.g., NIH) require applications months before starting dates. The Internship Documentation Form can be submitted as soon as you complete your internship but must be turned in by Friday of Week 10 in the term you expect to graduate.

The internship requirement can be waived if you have sufficient work experience in the Communication field. To request a waiver, please contact the program director. You will need to fill out the Waiver Form and attach a one-to-two page narrative documenting your work experience in professional communication, a letter from your supervisor, and submit your current resume. This can be done at any point in your program but must be submitted by Monday of Week 4 in the term you expect to graduate.

Students should discuss plans for an internship or waiver with the program director early on in their course work. This will allow for ample time to confirm expectations, plan for sufficient work experience, and complete the approval process in advance of graduation.

## **Graduation**

Students must apply for graduation. The application deadline is the Monday of Week 5 of the term in which you will graduate. The Graduate College [Graduation Requirements](#) page has updated information on dates, deadlines and the application process.

Drexel students need to be registered for at least one credit during the term in which they graduate. Please take this requirement into consideration when planning your courses and internship. If you complete all coursework, then do your internship, you will need to register for at least one additional credit to graduate.



# MS in Strategic & Digital Communication

## INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENT

### HOW TO FIND AN INTERNSHIP

#### STEINBRIGHT CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER (SCDC)

The SCDC is available to help you identify internship opportunities, revise your resume, work on cover letters, and prepare for interviews.

[www.drexel.edu/scdc](http://www.drexel.edu/scdc)

#### THE MS SDC PROGRAM

We send opportunities via our listserv and can help connect you to alumni and other professional contacts. Our LinkedIn program page is also a great resource:

[www.linkedin.com/groups/13568158](http://www.linkedin.com/groups/13568158)

#### HANDSHAKE

A database of employer posted jobs, Handshake is available to all Drexel students and alumni. Sign up at:

[www.drexel.joinhandshake.com/login](http://www.drexel.joinhandshake.com/login)

#### WEBSITES

[indeed.com](http://indeed.com) ~ [idealist.org](http://idealist.org)

[simplyhired.com](http://simplyhired.com) ~ [looksharp.com](http://looksharp.com)

### AFTER COMPLETING YOUR INTERNSHIP

Submit the Internship Documentation Form and a letter from your supervisor stating:

- 1) type of work completed
- 2) dates and total hours of your internship
- 3) percentage of work devoted to professional communication



### ABOUT

Students in the MS SDC program are required to complete a six- month, non-credit-bearing, full time internship - paid or unpaid - as part of their degree. The purpose of this internship is to ensure program graduates have relevant work experience and are better situated to succeed in the job market.



### TIME-FRAME

**Students can complete the internship in whatever increments and time-frame work best**

- Work a part time internship the entire time they are in the program
- Take the Summer Term off from coursework and do a full time three-month internship, supplemented by additional part time work
- Do a six consecutive month full time internship, either taking a break from coursework completely or working full time and taking one-to-three courses at night or online



### WAIVER

Students who come into the program with relevant work experience or are working in a relevant position while in the program have the opportunity to apply to waive the internship requirement. Please contact the Program Coordinator to get more details about the internship waiver.

It is ultimately the responsibility of the student to find and complete an internship.

Figure 1



## Offices: Contact Information and Locations

### Administrative Offices

Bursar's/Cashier's Office	Main Building 1 <sup>st</sup> floor	215-895-1600	Tuition payment, signing Stafford Loan checks, paychecks.
Financial Aid	Main Building Room 224	215-895-1081	Questions regarding Financial Aid
Drexel Central	Main Building, Room 106 or <a href="#">online</a>	215-895-1600	Information on registration, financial aid, billing, academics, transcripts, etc.
Human Resources	3201 Arch St. Suite 430	215-895-2850	Work Study students should complete and return forms for payment.
Payroll	3201 Arch St. 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor	215-895-2885	Paychecks for Work Study students
Student Receivables	3201 Arch St. 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor	215-895-1445	Billing problems; credit for financial aid; employer- assisted tuition deferred payment

### Services

For information on:

- [Drexel Central](#)
- [Graduate College](#)
- [Information Technology](#)
- [Student Services](#)
- [Counseling and Health Services](#)
- [Drexel Student Health Plan](#)
- [Transportation](#)
- [International Students and Scholars Services](#)
- [Off-Campus Housing](#)
- [Graduate On-Campus Housing](#)
- [Drexel Libraries\\*](#)

\*Graduate students at Drexel can also borrow books from [the libraries of the University of Pennsylvania](#). Ask for a form from the reference desk at Hagerty Library. Take that form to a library at Penn, and you can get a courtesy card. Be sure to take your Drexel ID when you go to Penn's libraries. The website for Penn's libraries is . The number for the Van Pelt Library, located at 34<sup>th</sup> and Walnut Streets, is 215-898-7555.

### Academic Calendars and Campus Maps

- [Academic Calendars](#)
- [Events Calendar](#)
- [Campus Directions and Map](#)



## Professional Standards for MS in Strategic & Digital Communication Students

When graduate students join the MS in Strategic and Digital Communication program, they become members of our academic, scholarly, and professional communities, which often extend beyond the university. MS SDC graduate students are expected to learn, respect, and abide by the professional codes of ethics and conduct that are commonly accepted in their field of study or area of research. These codes include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Academic Integrity:** Any work submitted in this program is expected to be your own. Any attempt to present anyone else's work as your own will be considered plagiarism, which is a form of academic misconduct. Proper quotation/citation and references are required. For more clarification on plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty, please see Drexel's [Student Code of Conduct](#) and the [Academic Integrity Policy](#). Cases of suspected plagiarism will be reported to Drexel's Office of Student Conduct. Always check with your course instructor if you are not sure about the proper use of quotations, citations, or references.
- **Professional Conduct:** In addition to academic integrity, MS SDC students must also demonstrate behavior and communication skills that are consistent with professional standards. The basic elements of professional behavior include tact; sensitivity to the needs and interests of students, staff, faculty and campus visitors, such as for example guest speakers; good judgment; and attention to professional responsibilities. Master's in Communication students have the responsibility to treat university faculty, staff, students and visitors respectfully and professionally. Students should contact the Director of the MS SDC program if they have questions about the specific expectations of this graduate program.
- **Professional Communication Skills:** The following represents the principal elements of professional communication, which apply to spoken and written communication in between students, instructors, staff members and visitors to campus and in classrooms (e.g. guest speakers). This includes, but is not limited to classroom conversations, email exchanges, online discussion boards, etc.
  - Be polite and respectful.
  - Be sensitive to cultural, religious, political and sexual orientation differences. Be respectful when opinions differ from your own; you can disagree but do it politely and professionally.
  - Address faculty, staff and guests by their appropriate or requested name.
  - Address emails to faculty members, staff, administration, and fellow students with an appropriate greeting and an appropriate salutation. Emails are professional pieces of correspondence, and informal greetings and/or language is not appropriate.
  - Use capital letters sparingly. THEY APPEAR AS IF YOU ARE SHOUTING.
  - Review emails before sending them. Check for grammar, spelling, punctuation and tone. Remember that messages can be misperceived in many ways.
- **Writing Expectations:** Professional writing standards are expected on all written communication (including emails) and course work. These include proper formatting, correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and careful proofreading. If you feel your writing skills would benefit from some additional help, consider scheduling an appointment with a member of Drexel's [Writing Center](#) (they offer online appointments). Of course, also don't hesitate to talk to your faculty.
- **Discussion Boards and In-Class Discussion:** Both spoken and written contributions must be significant to the topic and well-constructed and spell-checked (if response is written). Please remember to be polite in both our virtual as well as physical classrooms. Use only language that is appropriate in a professional environment. If you disagree with a classmate or the instructor,



please be respectful and courteous.

- **Due Dates:** Course assignments are expected to be submitted by the time they are due. The acceptance of late submissions is at the discretion of the individual instructor. It is the student's responsibility to ensure an assignment was submitted. It is also at the instructor's discretion whether a missed assignment can be made up.
- **In Short -- Student Conduct:** We respect our students and treat them as professionals. In return, we expect the same treatment from you and to each other. Make sure to adhere to the policies outlined in this document. For more information on university policies, regulations, and Drexel standards of conduct, please see [Drexel's Student Code of Conduct](#). Adherence to these professional standards of behavior and communication are essential elements of professional competence. Failure to meet these standards reflects adversely upon a student's suitability for our graduate program and may be grounds for academic probation or dismissal from the MS SDC program.

We look forward to working with you as you undertake your graduate studies and we hope you enjoy the program. Please never hesitate to contact us for help along the way.